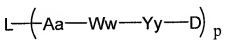
Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A compound of the Formula Ia:



Ia ;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,

wherein,

L- is a Ligand unit;

-A- is a Stretcher unit;

a is 1;

each -W- is independently an Amino Acid unit;

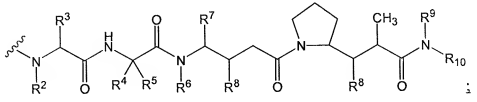
-Y- is a self-immolative Spacer unit;

w is an integer ranging from 2 to 12;

y is 1 or 2;

p ranges from 1 to about 20; and

-D is a Drug unit of the formula:



~~wherein,~~ the wavy line indicates the point of attachment to the Spacer unit, and

independently at each location:

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

R^4 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) ~~wherein;~~ R^5 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl; or R^4 and R^5 join and form a ring with the carbon atom to which they are attached and R^4 and R^5 have the formula -$(CR^aR^b)_n$- wherein; R^a and R^b are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl and -C_3-C_8 carbocycle and n is selected from the group consisting of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6;

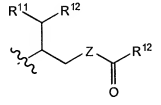
R^6 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

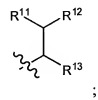
R^7 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

each R^8 is independently selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle and -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl);

R^9 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

R^{10} is selected from the group consisting of:



and


;

Z is -O-, -S-,-NH- or -N(R^{14})-;

R^{11} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, $-NH_2$, $-NHR^{14}$, $-N(R^{14})_2$, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl, $-C_3$-C_8 carbocycle, $-O-(C_1$-C_8 alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3$-C_8 heterocycle and $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle); or R^{11} is an oxygen atom which forms a carbonyl unit (C=O) with the carbon atom to which it is attached and a hydrogen atom on this carbon atom is replaced by one of the bonds in the (C=O) double bond;

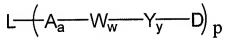
each R^{12} is independently selected from the group consisting of -aryl and $-C_3$-C_8 heterocycle;

R^{13} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, $-NH_2$, $-NHR^{14}$, $-N(R^{14})_2$, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl, $-C_3$-C_8 carbocycle, $-O-(C_1$-C_8 alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), C_3-C_8 heterocycle and $-C_{1-8}$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle); and

each R^{14} is independently -H or $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl.

2-6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) A compound of the formula Ia:



Ia ;

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,

wherein,

L- is a Ligand unit;

-A- is a Stretcher unit;

a is 1;

each -W- is independently an Amino Acid unit;

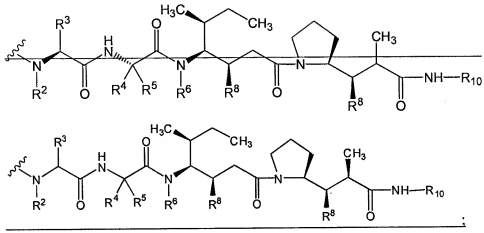
-Y- is a self-immolative Spacer unit;

w is an integer ranging from 2 to 12;

y is 1 or 2;

p ranges from 1 to about 20; and

-D is a Drug unit having the structure:



~~or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,~~

~~wherein,~~ the wavy line [is] indicates the point of attachment to the Spacer unit, and independently at each location:

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl;

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -methyl, and -isopropyl;

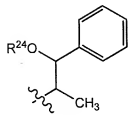
R^4 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl;

R^5 is selected from the group consisting of -isopropyl, -isobutyl, -sec-butyl, -methyl and -t-butyl or R^4 and R^5 join[,] and form a ring with the carbon atom to which they are attached and R^4 and R^5 have the formula $-(CR^aR^b)_n-$ wherein; R^a and R^b are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, and $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle, and n is selected from the group consisting of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6;

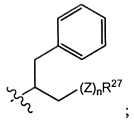
R^6 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl;

each R^8 is independently selected from the group consisting of -OH, -methoxy and -ethoxy;

R^{10} is selected from the group consisting of:



and



;

R^{24} is selected from the group consisting of H and -C(O)R^{25}-; ~~wherein~~ R^{25} is selected from the group consisting of -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

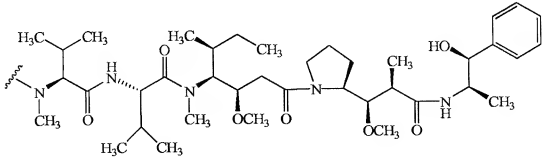
Z is -O-, -NH-, -OC(O)-, -NHC(O)-, or -NR^{28}C(O)-; ~~where~~ R^{28} is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

n is 0 or 1; and

R^{27} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -N_3, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) when n is 0; and R^{27} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) when n is 1.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Currently amended) [A]The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -D is a Drug unit having the structure:



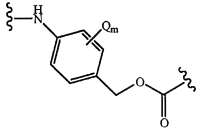
10-16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) [A]The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 or claim 7 wherein the Ligand unit is an antibody.

18. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 17 wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

19. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 18 wherein the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD30 antigen, the CD20 antigen, the Lewis X or Y antigen, the CD33 antigen, the CD38 antigen, the CEA antigen, the CD19 antigen, the CA15-3 antigen or the epidermal growth factor antigen.

20. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -Yy- is:



,

Q is selected from the group consisting of -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl), -halogen, -nitro and -cyano; and

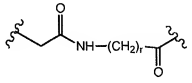
m is an integer ranging from 0-4, the amino terminus of -Yy- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the other terminus of -Yy- forming a bond with the Drug unit.

21. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -A- is:

,

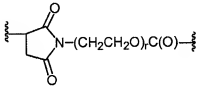
and r is an integer ranging from 1-10, the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino Acid unit and the succinimido terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

22. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -A- is:



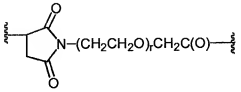
and r is an integer ranging from 1-10, the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino Acid unit and the amidomethyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

23. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -A- is:



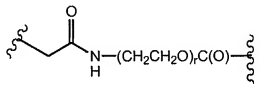
and r is an integer ranging from 1-10, the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the succinimido terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

24. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -A- is:



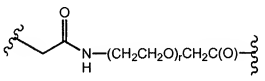
and r is an integer ranging from 1-10, the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the succinimido terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

25. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -A- is:



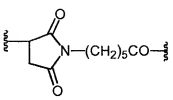
and r is an integer ranging from 1-10, the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the amidomethyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

26. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -A- is:



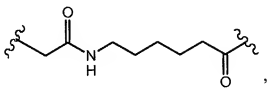
the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the amidomethyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

27. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 21 wherein -A- is:



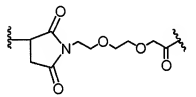
the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the succinimido terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

28. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 22 wherein -A- is:



the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the amidomethyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

29. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 24 wherein -A- is:

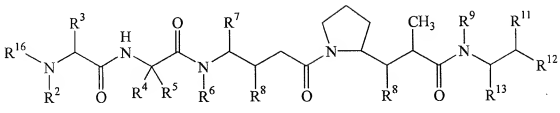


the carbonyl terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Amino acid unit and the succinimido terminus of -A- forming a bond with the Ligand unit.

30. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -W_w- is -Phenylalanine-Lysine-, the amino terminus of -W_w- forming a bond with the Stretcher unit and the C- terminus of -W_w-forming a bond with the Spacer unit.

31-43. (Canceled)

44. (Currently amended) A compound of the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof;

wherein, independently at each location:

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkoxy), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

R^4 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkoxy), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) ~~wherein;~~ R^5 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl; or R^4 and R^5 join and form a ring with the carbon atom to which they are attached and R^4 and R^5 have the formula: -$(CR^aR^b)_n$- wherein; R^a and R^b are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl and -C_3-C_8 carbocycle and n is selected from the group consisting of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6;

R^6 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

R^7 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkoxy), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

each R^8 is independently selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle and -O-(C_1-C_8 alkoxy);

R^9 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

R^{11} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, -NH_2, -NHR^{14}, -$N(R^{14})_2$, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-

(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle); or R^{11} is an oxygen atom which forms a carbonyl unit (C=O) with the carbon atom to which it is attached and a hydrogen atom on this carbon atom is replaced by one of the bonds in the (C=O) double bond;

each R^{12} is independently selected from the group consisting of -aryl and -C_3-C_8 heterocycle;

R^{13} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, -NH_2, -NHR^{14}, -$N(R^{14})_2$, -C_1-C_8 alkyl, -C_3-C_8 carbocycle, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkoxy), -aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-aryl, -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), -C_3-C_8 heterocycle and -C_1-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

each R^{14} is independently -H or -C_1-C_8 alkyl;

R^{16} is A'a-Ww-Yy-

~~wherein~~

each -W- is independently an Amino Acid unit;

-Y- is a self-immolative Spacer unit;

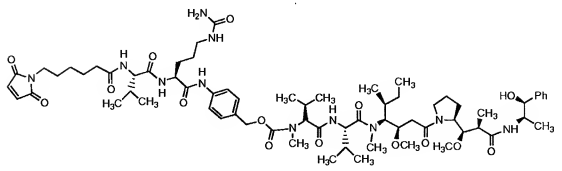
w is an integer ranging from 2 to 12;

y is 1 or 2;

-A' is a Stretcher unit; and

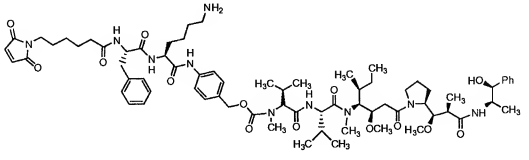
a is 1.

45. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 44 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

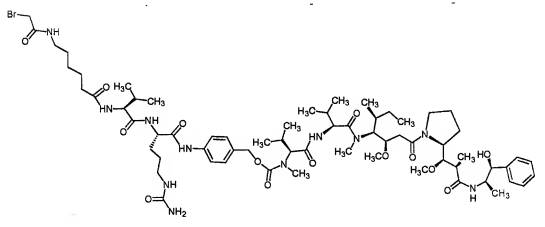
46. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 44 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

47. (Canceled)

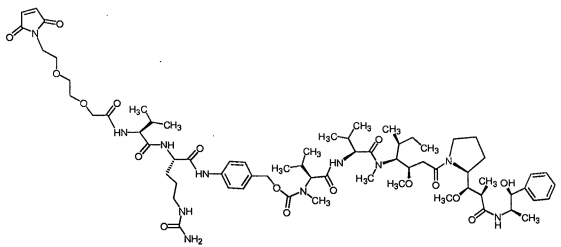
48. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 44 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

49-51. (Canceled)

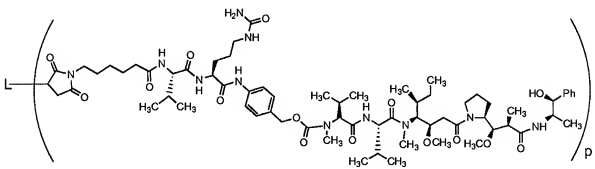
52. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 44 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

53. (Canceled)

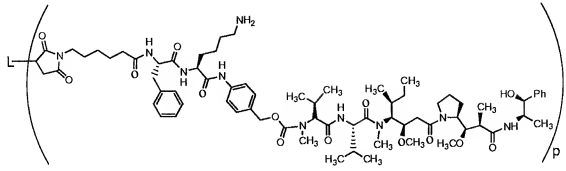
54. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 128 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

55. (Canceled)

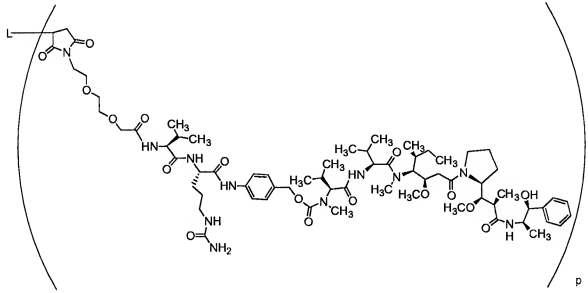
56. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 1 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

57-58. (Canceled)

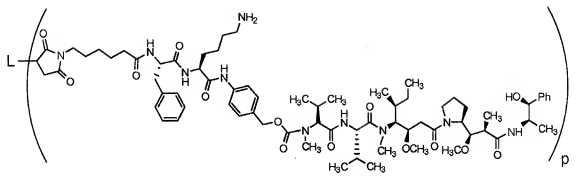
59. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 1 having the structure:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

60-76. (Canceled)

77. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 1 having the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein L is a monoclonal antibody.

78. (Canceled)

79. (Previously presented) The compound of claim 54 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein L is a monoclonal antibody.

80-99. (Canceled)

100. (Previously presented) The compound or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 79 wherein L specifically binds the CD20 antigen.

101-103. (Canceled)

104. (Previously presented) The compound or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 77 wherein L specifically binds the CD20 antigen.

105-110. (Canceled)

111. (Previously presented) A composition comprising an effective amount of a compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 1 or claim 7, and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or vehicle.

112-118. (Canceled)

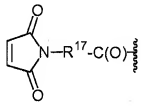
119. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 1 in an isolated or a purified form.

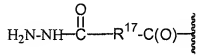
120. (Canceled)

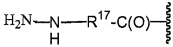
121. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein -W_w- is -valine-citrulline-, the amino terminus of -W_w- forming a bond with the Stretcher unit, and the C- terminus of -W_w- forming a bond with a the Spacer unit.

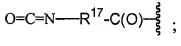
122. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 44 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 44, wherein

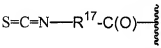
-A' is selected from the group consisting of:

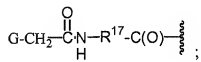

;

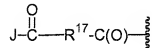

;

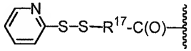

;

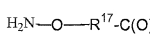

;


;


;


;


; and


;

~~wherein~~

G is selected from the group consisting of -Cl, -Br, -I, -O-mesyl and -O-tosyl;

J is selected from the group consisting of -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, -OH, -O-N-succinimide, -O-(4-nitrophenyl), -O-pentafluorophenyl, -O-tetrafluorophenyl and -O-C(O)-OR^{18};

[a is 1;]

R^{17} is selected from the group consisting of -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_3-C_8 carbocyclo-, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkoxy)-, -arylene-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-arylene-, -arylene-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-(C_3-C_8 carbocyclo)-, -(C_3-C_8 carbocyclo)-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_3-C_8 heterocyclo-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-(C_3-C_8 heterocyclo)-, -(C_3-C_8 heterocyclo)-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -$(CH_2CH_2O)_r$-, and -$(CH_2CH_2O)_r$-CH_2-;

r is an integer ranging from 1-10; and

R^{18} is -C_1-C_8 alkyl or -aryl.

123. (Canceled)

124. (Previously presented) A composition comprising an effective amount of a compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 79 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or vehicle.

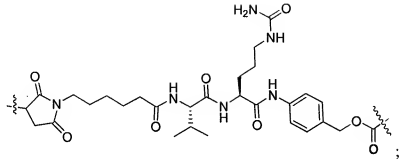
125. (Previously presented) A composition comprising an effective amount of a compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 121 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or vehicle.

126. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 79 in an isolated or a purified form.

127. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 121 in an isolated or a purified form.

128. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein

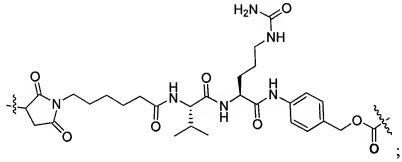
-Aa-Ww-Yy- has the formula:



the succinimido terminus forming a bond with the Ligand unit and the other terminus forming a bond with the Drug unit.

129. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 7 wherein

-Aa-Ww-Yy- has the formula:

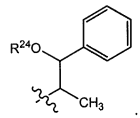


the succinimido terminus forming a bond with the Ligand unit and the other terminus forming a bond with the Drug unit.

130. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claims 128 or 129 wherein the ligand unit is a monoclonal antibody.

131. (Currently amended) The compound or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 1 wherein R^{10} is

132. (Currently amended) The compound or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof of claim 7 wherein R^{10} is:

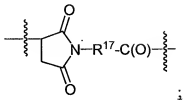


133. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 19 wherein the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD30 antigen.

134. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 19 wherein the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD19 antigen.

135. (Previously presented) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 19 wherein the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD33 antigen.

136. (Currently amended) The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein $-A_a-$ is:



~~wherein~~ R^{17} is selected from the group consisting of -C_1-C_{10} alkylene, C_3-C_8 carbocyclo-, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl)-, -arylene-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-arylene-, -arylene-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-(C_3-C_8 carbocyclo)-, -(C_3-C_8 carbocyclo)-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_3-C_8 heterocyclo-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-(C_3-C_8 heterocyclo)-, - (C_3-C_8 heterocyclo)-C_1-C_{10}alkylene-, -$(CH_2CH_2O)_r$-, and -$(CH_2CH_2O)_r$-CH_2-; and r is an integer ranging from 1-10.

137. (Currently amended) [A]The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein p ranges from 1 to about 5.

138. (Currently amended) [A]The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 79 wherein p ranges from 1 to about 5.

139. (Currently amended) [A]The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 54 wherein L is a monoclonal antibody that specifically binds the CD30 antigen, the CD20 antigen, the Lewis X or Y antigen, the CD33 antigen, the CD19 antigen, the CD38 antigen, the CEA antigen, the CA15-3 antigen or the epidermal growth factor antigen.

140. (Currently amended) [A]The compound or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 139 wherein the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD30 antigen.

141. (Currently amended) A composition comprising drug-linker-ligand conjugates having Formula Ia:

Ia

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof;

wherein,

L- is a Ligand unit;

-A- is a Stretcher unit;

a is 1;

each -W- is independently an Amino Acid unit;

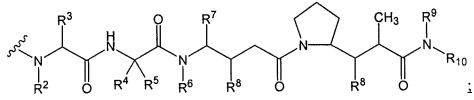
-Y- is a self-immolative Spacer unit;

w is an integer ranging from 2 to 12;

y is 1 or 2;

p ranges from 1 to about 5 and is the average number of $-A_a-W_w-Y_y-D$ units per ligand in the composition; and

-D is a Drug unit of the formula:



~~wherein,~~ the wavy line indicates the point of attachment to the Spacer unit, and independently at each location:

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl;

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle, $-O-(C_1-C_8$ alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3-C_8$ heterocycle and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

R^4 is selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle, $-O-(C_1-C_8$ alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3-C_8$ heterocycle and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) ~~wherein;~~ R^5 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl; or R^4 and R^5 join and form a ring with the carbon atom to which they are attached and

R^4 and R^5 have the formula $-(CR^aR^b)_n-$ wherein; R^a and R^b are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl and $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle and n is selected from the group consisting of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6;

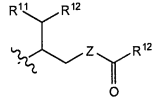
R^6 is selected from the group consisting of -H and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl;

R^7 is selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle, $-O-(C_1-C_8$ alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3-C_8$ heterocycle and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

each R^8 is independently selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle and $-O-(C_1-C_8$ alkyl);

R^9 is selected from the group consisting of -H and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl;

R^{10} is selected from the group consisting of:



and

;

Z is -O-, -S-,-NH- or $-N(R^{14})-$;

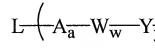
R^{11} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, $-NH_2$, $-NHR^{14}$, $-N(R^{14})_2$, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle, $-O-(C_1-C_8$ alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3-C_8$ heterocycle and $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle); or R^{11} is an oxygen atom which forms a carbonyl unit (C=O) with the carbon atom to which it is attached and a hydrogen atom on this carbon atom is replaced by one of the bonds in the (C=O) double bond;

each R^{12} is independently selected from the group consisting of -aryl and $-C_3-C_8$ heterocycle;

R^{13} is selected from the group consisting of -H, -OH, $-NH_2$, $-NHR^{14}$, $-N(R^{14})_2$, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl, $-C_3-C_8$ carbocycle, $-O-(C_1-C_8$ alkyl), -aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-aryl, $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), C_3-C_8 heterocycle and $-C_{1-8}$ alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle); and

each R^{14} is independently -H or $-C_1-C_8$ alkyl.

142. (Currently amended) A composition comprising drug-linker-ligand conjugates having Formula Ia:



Ia

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof

wherein,

L- is a Ligand unit;

-A- is a Stretcher unit;

a is 1;

each -W- is independently an Amino Acid unit;

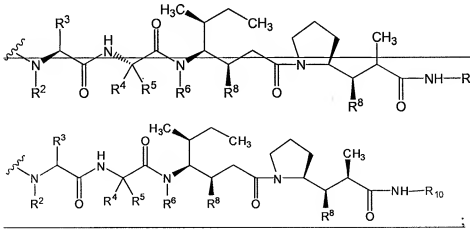
-Y- is a self-immolative Spacer unit;

w is an integer ranging from 2 to 12;

y is 1 or 2;

p ranges from 1 to about 5 and is the average number of $-A_a-W_w-Y_y-D$ units per ligand in the composition; and

-D is a Drug unit having the structure:



~~or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,~~

~~wherein,~~ the wavy line [is]indicates the point of attachment to the Spacer unit, and independently at each location:

R^2 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl;

R^3 is selected from the group consisting of -H, -methyl, and -isopropyl;

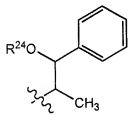
R^4 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl;

R^5 is selected from the group consisting of -isopropyl, -isobutyl, -sec-butyl, -methyl and -t-butyl or R^4 and R^5 join[,] and form a ring with the carbon atom to which they are attached and R^4 and R^5 have the formula $-(CR^aR^b)_n-$ wherein; R^a and R^b are independently selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl, and $-C_3$-C_8 carbocycle, and n is selected from the group consisting of 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6;

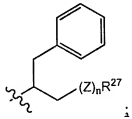
R^6 is selected from the group consisting of -H and -methyl;

each R^8 is independently selected from the group consisting of -OH, -methoxy and -ethoxy;

R^{10} is selected from the group consisting of:



and



;

R^{24} is selected from the group consisting of H and $-C(O)R^{25}$-; ~~wherein,~~ R^{25} is selected from the group consisting of $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl, $-C_3$-C_8 carbocycle, -aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3$-C_8 heterocycle and $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle);

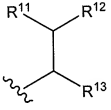
Z is -O-, -NH-, -OC(O)-, -NHC(O)-, or $-NR^{28}C(O)$-; ~~where,~~ R^{28} is selected from the group consisting of -H and $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl;

n is 0 or 1; and

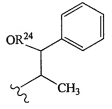
R^{27} is selected from the group consisting of -H, $-N_3$, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl, $-C_3$-C_8 carbocycle, -aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3$-C_8 heterocycle and $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) when n is 0; and

R^{27} is selected from the group consisting of -H, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl, $-C_3$-C_8 carbocycle, -aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-aryl, $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 carbocycle), $-C_3$-C_8 heterocycle and $-C_1$-C_8 alkyl-(C_3-C_8 heterocycle) when n is 1.

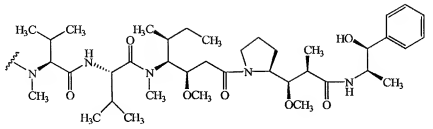
143. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 141 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, R^{10} is



144. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 142 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, R^{10} is

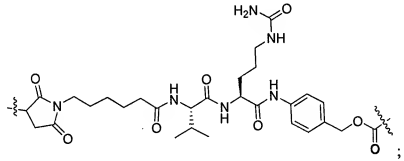


145. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 141 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, -D is a Drug unit having the structure:



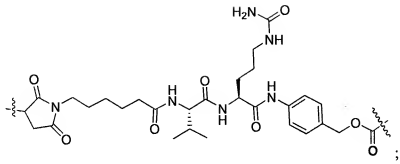
~~or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.~~

146. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 141 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, -Aa-Ww-Yy- has the formula:



the succinimido terminus forming a bond with the Ligand unit and the other terminus forming a bond with the Drug unit.

147. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 142 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, -Aa-Ww-Yy- has the formula:



the succinimido terminus forming a bond with the Ligand unit and the other terminus forming a bond with the Drug unit.

148. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 141 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the ligand unit is a monoclonal antibody.

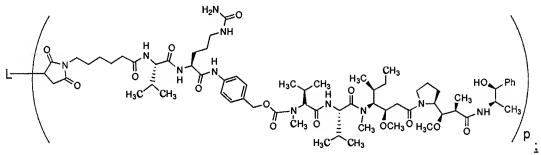
149. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 148 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD30 antigen, the CD20 antigen, the CD19 antigen, the Lewis X or Y antigen, the CD33 antigen, the CD38 antigen, the CEA antigen, the CA15-3 antigen or the epidermal growth factor antigen.

150. (Currently amended) The composition of 149 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD19 antigen.

151. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 149 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD30 antigen.

152. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 149 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD33 antigen.

153. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 147 wherein the drug-linker-ligand conjugates have the formula:



or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

154. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 153 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, L is a monoclonal antibody.

155. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 154 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD20 antigen, the CD30 antigen, the CD33 antigen, the CD19 antigen, the CD38 antigen, the CA15-3 antigen, the CEA antigen, or the epidermal growth factor antigen.

156. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 155 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the the CD30 antigen.

157. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 155 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD19 antigen.

158. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 155 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD20 antigen.

159. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 155 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD33 antigen.

160. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 142 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, L is a monoclonal antibody.

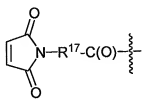
161. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 160 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD20 antigen, the CD30 antigen, the CD33 antigen, the CD19 antigen, the CD38 antigen, the CA15-3 antigen, the CEA antigen, or the epidermal growth factor antigen.

162. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 161 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the monoclonal antibody specifically binds the CD30 antigen.

163. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 154 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, the antibody is attached to the drug moiety through a cysteine residue of the antibody.

164. (Currently amended) The compound of claim 122 or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 122, wherein

A_a- is:



~~wherein~~ R^{17} is selected from the group consisting of -C_1-C_{10} alkylene, C_3-C_8 carbocyclo-, -O-(C_1-C_8 alkyl)-, -arylene-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-arylene-, -arylene-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-(C_3-C_8 carbocyclo)-, -(C_3-C_8 carbocyclo)-C_1-C_{10} alkylene-, -C_3-C_8 heterocyclo-

, -C_1-C_{10} alkylene-(C_3-C_8 heterocyclo)-, - (C_3-C_8 heterocyclo)-C_1-C_{10}alkylene-, -$(CH_2CH_2O)_r$-, and -$(CH_2CH_2O)_r$-CH_2-; and r is an integer ranging from 1-10.

165. (Currently amended) The compound ~~of claim 1~~ or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 1 wherein R^2 is -C_1-C_8 alkyl.

166. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 141 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, R^2 is -C_1-C_8 alkyl.

167. (Currently amended) The compound ~~of claim 7~~ or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt of the compound of claim 7 wherein R^2 is –methyl.

168. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 142 wherein in the drug-linker-ligand conjugates or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, R^2 is –methyl.